

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 3235

FOR IEU (SHIRLEY)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, HU

SUBJ: VISIT OF IVAN BOLDIZSAR - NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY

REF: STATE 226891

1. IVAN BOLDIZSAR USED TO BE A BIG MAN IN HUNGARY, THESE DAYS IS VISIBLY AGING AND SLIPPING. ALTHOUGH HIS INFLUENCE IS DIMINISHING, HE CONTINUES TO BE EDITOR OF THE NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY AND OF A THEATER MAGAZINE, HE IS A PROLIFIC WRITER OF ARTICLES FOR EVERY KIND OF DAILY, WEEKLY AND MONTHLY, AND HE CONTINUES TO HAVE FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES, THE MOST PROMINENT OF WHICH IS POLITBUREAU MEMBER AND CULTURAL CZAR GYORGY ACZEL. HE IS STILL PRESIDENT OF THE HUNGARIAN PEN CLUB.

2. BOLDIZSAR CONSIDERS HIMSELF TO BE ONE OF THE

GREATEST HUNGARIAN AUTHORITIES ON THE UNITED STATES, BUT HE IS FAR FROM THAT. HIS ASSESSMENTS ON MOST THINGS AMERICAN ARE FAR OFF BASE AND ARE WAY OUT-OF-DATE. DURING THE OLD DAYS OF FRIGID US - HUNGARIAN RELATIONS HE WAS ONE OF THE FEW WHO HAD CLEARANCE TO DEAL WITH AMERICANS, AND HE PLAYED THAT ROLE WITH GREAT GUSTO. AS A RESULT, HIS NAME IS BETTER KNOWN IN THE UNITED STATES THAN IT DESERVES TO BE, AND

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IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE SMITHSONIAN SHOULD HAVE

CHOSEN HIM TO PARTICIPATE IN A PRESTIGIOUS PROGRAM FOR THAT REASON. DURING A RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PAO IT WAS APPARENT THAT BOLDIZSAR GREATLY LOOKS FORWARD TO LECTURING AT THE CONFERENCE ON WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE UNITED STATES.

3. MOST OF BOLDIZSAR'S WRITING TO-DAY IS APOLOGISTIC PROPAGANDA FOR HUNGARY. SIX OR EIGHT OF HIS ARTICLES APPEAR EVERY WEEK, AND ALL DEAL WITH THE SAME THEME: HOW WONDERFUL EVERYTHING IS IN HUNGARY, AND HOW UNABLE WESTERNERS ARE TO APPRECIATE THIS.

4. AMBASSADOR ESZTERGALYOS' QUALIFICATION OF THE BOLDIZSAR VISIT AS AN IMPORTANT EVENT APPEARS FROM HERE TO BE AN OVERSTATEMENT. IT MAY SIMPLY BE DUE TO ESZTERGALYOS' WISH TO EMPHASIZE HUNGARIAN PARTICIPATION IN A BICENTENNIAL EVENT, IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT HUNGARY DID PRECIOUS LITTLE TO OBSERVE IT IN ANY MEANINGFUL WAY. ON THE OTHER HAND HE MAY HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY THE KNOWLEDGE THAT BOLDIZSAR IS UNDENIABLY A GOOD FRIEND OF ACZEL'S.

5. CONSIDERING THE LATTER FACT, BOLDIZSAR SHOULD DEFINITELY NOT BE SLIGHTED WHILE IN WASHINGTON. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT SHOULD THE REQUEST BE MADE, BOLDIZSAR BE RECEIVED AT A SUITABLE LEVEL IN THE DEPT. HE IS PERSONNALLY KNOWN TO USIA ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SHIRLEY, WHO MAY ALSO BE WILLING TO SEE HIM.

6. BOLDIZSAR IS NOT AT ALL UP-TO-DATE ON DETAILS ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF US - HUNGARIAN RELATIONS, BUT HE IS A KNOWLEDGEABLE AND INSIGHTFUL COMMENTATOR ON THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL/POLITICAL SITUATION IN HUNGARY. HE IS NOT LIKELY TO BE ACTING AS A SPOKESMAN OR AS THE BEARER OF ANY OFFICIAL MESSAGES.

7. EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT ANY MEETINGS WHICH DO MATERIALIZE BE UTILIZED TO SOLICIT BOLDIZSAR'S VIEWS ON CURRENT EVENTS IN HUNGARY AND TO PROVIDE HIM WITH A BRIEFING ON US POLICIES TOWARD HUNGARY.
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8. FYI: DURING ONE OF BOLDIZSAR'S EARLIER VISITS TO THE US, HE MANAGED THROUGH SOME UNEXPLAINED CIRCUMSTANCE TO BE RECEIVED BY THEN SECRETARY WILLIAM ROGERS. WE ARE INCLINED TO DOUBT THAT HE WILL BE RECEIVED AT A COMPARABLE LEVEL THIS TIME AROUND, BUT DEPT. SHOULD BE AWARE OF THIS BIT OF PAST HISTORY.
MUDD

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